

**Session : 7**

**Date : 20-02-2006**

**Participants : Ramdoss Dr. Anbumani, Pawar Shri Sharad Chandra Govindrao**

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Title : Statement regarding reported outbreak of Avian influenza (Bird Flu) in Navapur, Nandurbar district, Maharashtra.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, the hon. Minister of Agriculture to make a statement on the bird flu situation.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): Sir, large scale death of poultry had been reported from Navapur Taluka of District Nandurbar, Maharashtra. Preliminary investigations had indicated the possibility of Newcastle (Ranikhet) disease. Samples were also sent to High Security Animal Disease Laboratory (HSADL), Bhopal, to test for Avian Influenza.

The samples have since been tested at HSADL, Bhopal. Test reports confirm that samples are positive for H5N1 strain of Avian Influenza in poultry in Navapur, District Nandurbar, Maharashtra.

A series of strategic actions have been initiated immediately on confirmation of Avian Influenza. These actions include declaration of infected and surveillance areas, absolute ban on movement of poultry or its products in infected areas, closure of poultry and egg markets and shops, destruction of affected poultry followed by proper disposal etc<sup>[r1]</sup>.

The Government of India has rushed to Maharashtra vaccines for poultry, Tamiflu for humans and personal protective equipment. Rapid Response Teams of the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare have been rushed to the affected areas. The teams of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare are carrying out surveillance of human population in the area.

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\* Placed in Library. See No. LT 3686/06

It is the policy of the Government to compensate for loss of poultry on account of culling and destruction of birds. The Government of India will share costs of compensation on 50:50 basis with the State Governments. The present outbreak is localized to a limited area in Navapur Taluka of Nandurbar district in Maharashtra. Containment operations will extend to cover some poultry in adjoining areas in Uchchhal Tehsil of Surat district in Gujarat State also. I would like to point out that as per WHO recommendations, poultry and poultry products can be safely consumed if cooked to 70° C in all parts of the food.

I would like to assure the House and the public that there is no cause for panic. The Government is keeping a close watch on the situation. Other States have also been alerted to remain vigilant.

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MR. SPEAKER: The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare would also like to make a statement on the same subject.

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): Mr. Speaker, Sir, first of all I would like to apologise for not bringing out the copy in Hindi. We shall do it later on.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has issued an alert that Bird Flu could spread to other countries including India after an outbreak of Avian Influenza Virus (H5N1) was first detected in the Republic of Korea in December, 2003.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India took adequate measures to contain the human cases of Avian Influenza if it is to happen. A Joint Monitoring Group was set up on 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2004 under the chairmanship of the Director-General of Health Services, which is reviewing the situation regularly. A National Consultation Meeting on Pandemic preparedness was taken by me on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2005 with all stakeholders to discuss the Influenza Pandemic Preparedness and Response Plan and after subsequent reviews, decision was taken for instituting interventions in a phased manner.

The Chief Secretaries of all the States and Union Territories and Secretary, Department of Animal Husbandry were requested to keep a close watch on fatality among bird population, especially poultry and appearance of severe respiratory illness in the exposed human population and to inform any such occurrence to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Other Ministries like Home, Shipping, External Affairs, Environment and Forests were also alerted.

A contingency plan to manage human cases of Avian Influenza was prepared and circulated to all States. A model State action plan was prepared and discussed with State Health Secretaries. The National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) Delhi has been identified as the nodal agency to investigate any

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discussed with State Health Secretaries. The National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) Delhi has been identified as the nodal agency to investigate any

suspected cases or outbreak. National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune was also identified for laboratory support. Rapid response teams were constituted and kept in readiness. Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) strengthened Influenza Surveillance network.

A Task Force under the chairmanship of the Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare was constituted to ensure availability of drugs and vaccines for management of Avian Influenza in the country. This task force decided to procure one lakh courses of Oseltamivir (Tamiflu). Sir, 50,000 courses of Oseltamivir and 10,00 personal protective equipments were stockpiled.

NICD trained State level rapid response teams and held sensitization workshops for paramilitary forces. Information, Education and Communication (IEC) strategies have been finalized. This was about the preparedness.

Now, I come to the response part. Information was received from the Department of Animal Husbandry about large-scale mortality in poultry from Navapur taluk, Nandurbar District of Maharashtra on 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2006. Preliminary reports had revealed the possibility of New Castle disease. Further, the test reports of some samples from affected poultry were confirmed as positive for H5N1 strain of Avian Influenza on 18<sup>th</sup> February, 2006.

However, as a matter of abundant caution and without waiting for confirmation from High Security Animal Disease Laboratory (HSADL), Bhopal, Rapid Response Team (RRT) of NICD was deputed to Navapur, Maharashtra on 16<sup>th</sup> February, 2006 itself with all the necessary medicines and equipments. The team is presently surveying the area to identify the people who may have come in contact with the infected birds.

On 17<sup>th</sup> February, the RRT visited the local hospitals and observed that over the last 10 days there was no patient with common flu symptoms. However, subsequently six persons with symptoms of common cold were detected and are under observation. [\[r2\]](#)

[\[lb3\]](#)

None of these cases have any pneumonia. The teams are in the field and assisting the State health authorities in carrying out active surveillance (house to house search) to identify suspected cases among contacts of infected poultry. In order to make confirmatory tests, the RRT has obtained clinical samples randomly from the bird handlers and sent to NIV, Pune and NICD, Delhi. The samples are being tested as per protocols. Another RRT has been sent to Surat District, Gujarat on 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2006.

The Navapur sub-district hospital has been strengthened. Isolation beds have been created and dedicated staff identified for treating cases. Four ventilators have reached Navapur along with two anesthetists.

On 19<sup>th</sup> February 2006 Department of Animal Husbandry has started culling of birds as per their contingency plan. The RRT sensitized the cullers on proper use of personal protective equipment and self care. Health status of cullers are being monitored.

My Ministry has dispatched 11,000 doses of Tamiflu and 3,000 sets of Personal Protective Equipment to Maharashtra and Gujarat besides meeting the immediate requirement of Department of Animal Husbandry and is in constant touch with the State health authorities of Maharashtra, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. Cabinet Secretary has also been reviewing the situation on regular basis.

Round the clock control room is functioning from Emergency Medical Relief Division, Directorate General of Health Services (Tel. No. 23061302; FAX: 23061457) and from National Institute of Communicable Diseases, 22, Sham Nath Marg (Tel. No. 23921401; FAX: 23913028).

As on date there is no confirmed case of human Avian Influenza. I would like to assure the House that the situation is being closely monitored and under control.

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प्रो. विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा (दक्षिण दिल्ली) : अध्यक्ष जी, स्थिति उससे कहीं ज्यादा गम्भीर है, जितनी यहां बताई गई। वार्निंग होने के बाद भी यह हुआ कैसे और सरकार क्या इसमें सोती रही? It is a very serious matter. ...  
(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I have myself requested the Government to make a statement.

... (Interruptions)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : There was a warning in 2003. ...(व्यवधान) और यहां हिन्दुस्तान के अन्दर यह आया कैसे? ...(व्यवधान)

MR. SPEAKER: It cannot be replied like this. Please listen. This is very unfortunate.

... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please, for once you sit down. For Heaven's sake, please sit down. Because of the seriousness of the matter, I felt that as the Speaker I should direct the Government to make a statement. I was told that the Government itself was ready to make a statement. Therefore, the Government has made a statement at the earliest opportunity. I am not taking any credit for that. It is a serious matter to be discussed on a proper basis. If you want further discussion, you can have it later. This type of question-answer cannot be done now.

... (Interruptions)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : The failure of the Government must be highlighted. ... (Interruptions) How has the bird flu come to India? ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Even to establish the failure of the Government, you have to take certain actions. Please do it. Can you move a no-confidence motion against this?

Shri Prabhunath Singh.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI HARIN PATHAK (AHMEDABAD): What steps have been taken? ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: You have not listened to the statement. He has given an elaborate statement. If you are not satisfied, you can raise it in a proper manner. Please do it in a proper manner. I never said, 'no'. Why are you saying?

... (*Interruptions*)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Sir, we are not at all satisfied with it. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: If you are not satisfied, you have many opportunities to raise it.

... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (BALASORE): Sir, I have nothing against the Government. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: You may have something to do. I have nothing with that.

... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN : Sir, the hon. Agriculture Minister has said that if you heat the meat at 70 degree, then nothing will happen. If that be so, then why has the Government of Maharashtra ordered for culling and killing about nine lakh birds. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: That is for food. 70 degree cooking is for food and not of the birds.

Now, Shri Prabhunath Singh. Only Shri Prabhunath Singh's observation will be taken on record.

(*Interruptions*) ...\*

MR. SPEAKER: I am not allowing this type of intervention. When I am allowing all discussions, you cannot interrupt the House. I will allow a discussion on this. You can raise all these issues at 2 o' clock when the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address starts. Even then, *suo motu* the Government has made a statement. I will allow a full discussion on this.

Please take your seats.

... (*Interruptions*)

गृह मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री माणिकराव होडल्या गावित) : मैं वहीं था। वहीं से आ रहा हूँ... (व्यवधान)

MR. SPEAKER: There are competent Ministers who have already dealt with it.

... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Ramdas Athawale, please take your seat.

Now, Shri Prabhunath Singh.

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\*Not Recorded